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Two Ancient Patternes of true
GOODNESSE,
AND
CHARITY.

One of JOB in the midst of his
HONOVR & WEALTH.

The other of the Widow of S AREPTA
in the Extremity of Her

POVERTIE.

Both now Published together, as fit to be
followed in these necessitous Times.

AND

Both Dedicated to the Living Patterne of true
GOODNESSE and CHARITIE

GILBERT L^d Archbishop of Canterbury,
Primate and Metropolitan of all England, &c.

By

DAVID STOKES D.D. and Fellow of
Eaton College neare Winasor.

HEBR. 13. 16.

*To do Good and to Distribute forget not: for with such Sacrifices
God is well pleased.*

OXFORD, Printed by H. Hall Printer to the University:
for RICHARD DAVIS. 1667.

436:07

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A
S E R M O N
Upon 1 K I N G S 17.15.
of the Widow of
S A R E P T A

PREACHED

A T

Eaton Coll: Octob: 10. 1666.

Being a Solemne Fast in consideration of
the dreadfull Fire in the Citiie of
London.

By
DAVID STOKES D. D.

O X F O R D
Printed by Hen: Hall for Ric: Davis. 1667.

16 MAY 2

1952 H. H. Wilson

of the Wilsons

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Abiit & fecit — She went and did according

to the word of Elijah —

Abiit & fecit — She went and did according

BY His M A J E S T I E S Pro-
clamation, we are coman-
ded to meeete here this day,
Not onely to bewaile those
sins, wherein we have con-
tributed to the common ca-
lamity, and (like incendiaries) either kind-
led, or increased the late dreadfull Fire in our
great and noble City of *London*. But besides
that, we are commanded to expresse our cha-
rity too, in a Liberall Contribution to the
poorest of the City, that suffer most heavily.

Now for the first Duty [of sad Repen-
tance] I thinke I shall need to say little at

this time, because I presume your many former Fastes (in a sense of Warre, and Infection) have already shewed that, before Almighty God himselfe. But in this Fast, our most Gratiouse and Indulgent King (in His tender love to His great city) would have us to let him see our extraordinary Acts of Charity, upon so publick, and so sad an affliction.

Therefore He recalls to your memory a *μύρων* (as the *Hellenists* call it) that is, a fiery triall, to see whether upon so great an occasion, you are apt to admit large charitable thoughts, and interpret them in the deare language of Contribution, which will be this day used throughout all the Kingdome. In which thoughts, and acts, and language of Charity, that the poorest may be as forward as the rich (to their power in such an exigence) I have chosen a Text, which will shew you a rare Patterne of Charity in a poore Widow. *1 Kings 17.15. Abiit & fecit*...

Of which words, that we may so Speake, and so Heare.... &c.

1 K I N G S 17:15.

And she went and did according to the Word of Elijah, and she, and he, and her house did eate many dayes.

If you aske of whom this is spoken... It is spoken of a poore Prophet (Elijah the Tisbite) and a poore widow (the Widow of Sarepta.) The Prophet is so poore, that (wanting the former supply of meat which he had by a Raven, and the brooke Cherith, of which he usually drunke, being dried up) he comes abroad now as a plaine Begger; for a little water and a morsell of bread: and the widow is so poore, that if you believe her upon her oath, she hath not a piece of bread, to bestow upon her selfe, and her onely sonne. *As the Lord thy God liveth (saith she) I have not a cake, but a handfull of meale in a barrell, and a little oyle in a cruse; and bebold I am gathering two or three sticks, that I may goe in and dresse it for mee and my sonne, that wee may eate, and die.*

Here is poore encouragement for Elijah, and little hope of finding hospitality in her house,

house ; and therefore, sure, he was hard driven now, that he begins with her, or at least, they were all shrowdly put to it , as they were indeed . So ill it was with them, that hee could hardly have begged of any that had much to spare .

But there is more in it then so . Some-
what else there was , that made our Saviour
say of her , to them of Nazareth , Luk. 4.
I tell you of a truth , that many widowes there
were in Israel , in the dayes of Elijah (when the
heavens were shut up three yeares , and six
months) but to none of them was Elijah sent ,
save unto Sarepta a City of Sidon , to a woman
there that was a widow .

Some rare good woman she was , whom God had
thus singled out , in this great famine , to so high
a favour of miraculous preservation , and
(from all other) selected , and set apart to be
the Hostesse , and Benefactresse , to the great
Elijah .

That she was so , it will easily be discov-
ered in the whole force , and vertue of the
verse , which referrs especially to her .

And

And that two wayes, which are the two parts of the Text.

1. In the high commendation of her *Charity* (*Abiit & fecit juxta verbum Eliæ*. There is a proofe of her charity in every word.)

2. In the present reward of her *Charity* (in her meale and oyle miraculously increased) *She, and he, and her house, did eate many dayes.*

There is the *Preservation* of them all alive, by the multiplying of the widows store: whereof she had so charitably emptied her selfe upon the Prophet.

Or if you will have both these *Parts* of the verse (like severall degrees) to make up the height of her commendation.

In the first part of the verse, it is but *Charity*, In the second part it is charity and some what more: it is improved, and come up to *Hospitality*.

She grows rich with her vertues, and being not able to furnish him at present, with a piece of bread, she now becomes like some body, able to entertaine him at her house, as a Prophet: with a competent supply of all that he wanted; And not any longer as a Beg-

ger, with a little bread and water for him, while he stood without at the gate. For she went and according to the word of Elijah, that is, she fetched bread and water for him, while hee stood without at the gate.

Then he, and she, and her house did eate together many dayes. That is, she lodged, and entertained him in her house: and shewed her selfe as hospitable then, as she had been charitable before.

1. The first thing then, that offers it selfe to our view, is her charity. And many circumstances there be to amplifie that. Some in reference to her selfe; some in reference to the Prophet. Some in reference to the action here done, to the order and manner of it. All these are considerable in this action of the poore woman; and cannot (without injury both to her, and you) be passed over in silence.

There are foure at least that refer to her selfe,

1. and so on with the rest Woman.

2. and so on with the rest Woman of Sarepta a Sidonian.

3. and so on with the rest Widow woman.

4. and so on with the rest Mother, and she was not only Mater

Mater familias (the *Mrs* of a family) but *Mater filii* (the mother of a son too.) And had she been eased of the rest of her family: she had little enough to keep her selfe, and her son alive to the next day.

These referre to her selfe, (and notwithstanding all these) she went first to supply the wants of *Elijah*.

Other considerations there are, that referre to the Prophet. And (amongst these) three that are most eminent, and must not be concealed,

- 1. { *A Stranger, one of another country from her;*
- 2. { *That he was A Prophet.* and chiefly
- 3. { *This Prophet (Elijah the Tishbite)*

That this man (whom she thus entertaines) was the very Prophet, I doe not say that foretold this famine (wherein they were all likely to perish.)

But more then so,

The only man, to whose zeale they wholly imputed this misery:

The maine instrument that brought it

upon them, and by whose meanes it seemed to be so long continued.

The man that saith, in the first verse of this chapter [and in the presence of the King himselfe]

As the Lord God of I/rael liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew, nor raine these yeares, but according to my word.

He that had said thus, would you thinke that his mouth should be heard, and fed too? and with that food, that is therefore wanting to her selfe? would you thinke that her distressed house, should be made a sanctuary for him, and every thing should be done (*juxta verbum ejus*) as he would have it that brought the famine upon them?

It is a wonder she falls not about his eares, or (at least) that she doth not raise up the people against him, to apprehend him, and take away his life, that brought them all in danger of theirs.

But in that she conceales him, in that shee obeys him, in that she saves his life: and saves it with the hazard of her owne and her childs: can there be any other circumstance added to this wonder? Yes,

3. Yes, there can be so, for (as I told you) all this referres unto him, but now some-
thing there is, that amplifies the *action it selfe*,
from the *order*, and the *manner* of it.

1. *Abiit & fecit*, that is, she doth it with alacrity, and chearfulnesse (wherein the life of every good action consists) without any more adoe, without any further dispute, as soon as she knew his mind, she went about it.

Fecit juxta verbum Eliæ, that is, she doth it in that order that he would have it, to serve him first, before she provide for her selfe, and her sonne.

She tooke not her owne method of charity (to begin with her selfe and her sonne) but she followes that order, that the man of God prescribes her, by speciall dispensation.

First and presently to begin with him.

And thus, you see, in all there be three severall wayes by which wee may perceive, the true extent of her charity, Now (to look upon them more distinctly.)

1. I will begin first, with those that reflect upon her selfe, and (in that ranke) first to consider her as a woman.

She went, and did according to the word of Elijah. we are here provoked to emulation by the weaker Sex.

And it must be confessed, that as in many other vertues, by *Deborah*, by *Hannah*, by the foure *Maryes*, (and some of that ranke) so here in the workes of charity: we have a *Copy set by a silly woman*: I will not say that the greatest Ladies, and Dames may learne to take out, but I will say more, that never any of the Nobler sex have come so neare, as to expresse it, in all things, to the life.

And I would they had onely out-stript us in *Charity*, to which (being more tender hearted) perhaps we may perswade them, that they are more inclinable by nature) but I feare they have sometimes had the happiness to be able to instance a preheminence in something else.

I will not conceale what Saint *Chrysostome* saith of his time, (on *Ephes. 4.*) that things were come to that passe: Men were growne so effeminate, so proud, so inconstant, so phantasticall, and women, on the contrary, so laborious, so discreet, and so resolute, that he thought

thought it might be a question ~~the woman~~ ; [if it were Englished, such a question from such a one as *Chrysostome*, would please some women too much] And at this time, whereof we read in my Text, there was no piety matchable to that of the great Prophet Elijah, but onely that of Obadiah, that hid so many Prophets in a cave, and this of the woman, to whom Elijah came. And I doubt not, but *Chrysostome* was of opinion, that in some respects, she exceeded the great Elijah, and Obadiah too.

For he seemes to conceive Elijah carried a little too farre in his zeale, and perhaps brought hither to be schooled of this woman; not so much by observing her want and misery, as by seeing her wonderfull and *Charitable affection*, that, when he begged of her, presently welcomed him with all her store : Him, that was in no greater streights then she her selfe : Him, that had not, besides himselfe, a family also, to provide for, as she had : and lastly, Him, that being thus heard, at his first begging from her, yet would not so much as begge, and sollicite his God by prayers,

Chrys. Tom.
8. pag. 31.
(H.S.)

prayers, for the release of hers, and the common calamity.

O woman great is thy Charity!

*I say not this to make women proud, that are commonly too apprehensive of any fewell, fit for that vice to feed on, but to encourage them, and withall to rouse up the guides, and Lords of the weaker Sex; that so we may have *Omnia bene*: Women being (after so good patternes and præcedents) ambitious of all vertue, to the highest capacity of their nature, and men expressing by their actions, that they move in a higher Spheare, and are as worthy of preheminence, as they are ready to challenge it by a grant, and patent, from the maker of them both.*

But I goe on.

We have looked upon this Charitable person in her Sex.

2. Now we come (in the second place) to consider her in her country, *as she was a Sidonian a woman of Sarepta*; how she, that was so, went and did according to the word of *Elijah*.

Sidon was a City in Syria, by the Sea side, and

and bordering upon *Iudea*, a very ancient and famous City, from whence, it seemes, the whole Territory thereabout were called *Sidonians*.

Among them is *Sarepta*, a lesser and more obscure Towne, some six miles from *Sidon*, and a place (as it was conjectured by the name) where they were wont to melt, and fashion diverse mettals.

This Country of the *Sidonians*, was wholly overspread with *gross Idolatry*. And yet, you may see, by the manner of her oath, if there were no more, that *in the midst of wicked Pagans*, she served the true God. And she served him *in no ordinary measure*, as appeares by this *high degree of Charity*. A *virtue* *Mat. 25.* *that hath the Keyes of Heaven*, and by which only it may seem, God will pronounce his sentence of blessing and cursing, at the last day, as if no other vertue were of like value with that.

And no mervaile, For it is a vertue of so large use and extent that it may be called, the *Mistress of the rich*, the *Mother of the Poor*, the *Patronesse of Widowes*, the *Nurse of little Or-*

C phans,

phans ; the store-house and Treasure of the needy , and the common haven and refuge of all that are afflicted.

And in this virtue doth she excell.

Neither is it charity alone , for which this Sidonian of Sarepta is so admirable in her selfe. A great and wonderfull Faith is the root, and commendation of this charity ; and all her charity is but the fruit, and evidence of a lively Faith.

Nor have I yet said all , It is Faith accompa-
nied with obedience to God and his Prophet : a
Faith wherein she cast her selfe upon God's
Providence , resolving , (since the Prophet
would have it so) to feed him with that,
with which, onely being left , she had in-
tended to preserve her owne life , and the
life of her child. She stopt her eares to the
cry of her faint and hungry child, and *Abiit*
& fecit.

An argument of such a Faith in this Si-
donian of Sarepta , as was not now to be
found in all Israel: So easily do the weake things
of this world confound the things that are migh-
ty, &c. The foolish things of the world con-
found

found the wise: And the very Heathen shame
the open Professors of true religion.

Many of those professors (not content with
their owne) defraud, and oppresse, and de-
taine from others, that which is their due,
but this Sidonian, in extremity of poverty,
could part with all that she had of her owne.

Many great professors are loath to give
upon extraordinary knowne and publique
occasions, but here is a Sidonian, that wil-
lingly empties her selfe in a private act of
Charity. An act that will yet appeare the
greater if you will now please to consider,

3. *Her as a widow woman too.* For so she
was, and yet, *Abiit & fecit.*

If any might be excused from deeds of
charity, surely a poore widow might be so,
but here is a good poore widow, that dreams
of no such priviledge, annexed either to her
poverty, or to her widowhood, or to her
virtue, or to any thing else.

She might have said, Alas! I am a poore
widow, that labour hard for what I have.

You see I have none in my house, so
much at leasure as to gather mee a few

C 2 sticks:

sticks : and yet, with all our paines, we have hardly enough to keep life & soule together.

What almes do you expect from mee ? she might have said so , and many , in her case, would have said it, but she, good soule, looks for none of these shifts. If shee got any thing by strength and labour, shee was willing to sacrifice it unto him that bestowed that strength of body upon her.

In her greatest extremitie, shee was not so hasty to carue for her selfe , but that shee had rather be poorer in meanes , if so shee might prove her selfe to be richer in love to him, that ever highly prized a little , given by them, that have but a little.

It would not be amisse for us, to be think our selves how much our love comes short of those many circumstances , that make a wonder of hers , that so we may , with the great Elijah here, borrow a little of her oyle, to encrease, and keep in the fire of our Charity.

Then may we perhaps say , with Saint Basit ^{his} ~~his~~ ^{is} ~~is~~ poor. If all our store were brought to one loafe and a poore soule should truly want it, and aske for it , that one loafe must be kept

S.B. concion.
habit. in Fam.
& Siccit.

no longer in our store:

Durus sermo, you will say, but what Saint Basil bath said, this widow bath done.

Nay she hath done more, for, she had not actually so much as a loafe, she had but the poore materialls of a loafe that might be: and she doth both make it for him, and give it too: that he might have her labour and service, as well as her Charity.

And what we have here done by this widow, that under the testimony of two it might be confirmed, we have also seconded by another widow in the Gospel, to whom our Saviour gave that open testimony of her two mites. That widow gave all of her owne accord.

And, here in my Text, to take away all Apology from those that are rich in meanes, and poore in almes, this poore widow hath done it, at the Prophets direction: which is the third thing wherein the extent of her Charity may fully appeare.

4. From thence we must yet goe further to a fourth degree of amplification, that we may looke upon her, as a Mother, that under-valued

valued the power of naturall affection in a case of exigency, for the expression of her Charity.

And for this I wot well, that it was a singular case of particular dispensation, and therefore not idle, or indiscreetly to be followed, with prejudice to the necessary supply of Kindred and Family.

But I look upon it here, as a thing that she easily, and willingly did, *never going about the bush*, to shelter a covetous, and uncharitable mind, under the name of common Providence, and naturall affection, but making her Motherhood, with such ease and chearfulness, give way to her Charity, as if she had went to teach all Parents, in this one act of hers, that seasonable Charity should rather prove them to be wise, and carefull Parents, then any way improvident, and forgetfull of their Children. A truth most certaine and undenieable, whether you examine it in the poore to whom; or the Children and Family from whom it is given.

1. If you consider the poore.

She was not, nor can we be ignorant, that the

the poor (by a blessing upon their prayers, in our behalfe) may easily become greater Benefactors, then either we are to the poor, or any that are rich can be to us; For the rich are full vessels: We rather spill then poure any thing into them that can be long reserved, it is well if they belch you out a complement for the present, but the poor are empty vessels, capable and fit, whatsoever we pour into them, we treasure up safe for our selves, and ours, to the best advantage.

It will prove so in the meanest of them, they that are *blind* can best conduct us into the light of Heaven, the lame can best carry us into Paradise, the sick can best cure our maladies, the prisoners can set us soonest at liberty, the *Orphans* can surest provide us of a heavenly Father, and (in a word) the poor and needy can give us, and our children the most permanent riches.

We usually look upon them, as appearing abject and base in their persons, and have quite forgot, that they have put on the person of Christ; for which cause our Saviour himself seems to speake of them as little

tle Saviours, they shall bring you in to everlasting Mansions (saith he) I know well how those words may be understood (in the Hebraisme) they shall bring you, that is, the Angels or they that shall be appointed so to do, As (in that other place) *Stulte hac nocte auferent, they shall take away thy soul*, that is, they which shall be appointed.

But I dare say if we have any mediators under Christ *next unto the Priests*, these are they, their plea, and their accusation is of great moment.

Our Saviour tells us of no other cause, heard in the day of Judgment, but only theirs. And therefore we have reason to think, that at other times his eares are as open to their prayers for us.

So that hitherto the charity of a mother was well enough bestowed, in regard of the poor unto whom.

2. But we must take some more pains, to look upon it in that which comes nearer to her particular case, with an eye to her only child, and poor family, from whom this almes was given.

Wherin

Wherein, to omit that *every man is left as a friend and Patron to the children of such persons,*

To say nothing of this,

She knew well for whose sake she did it, and she assured her selfe, that, when all her store was spent, *God's Providence was neither spent, nor any way more exhausted*, then it was before; therefore she was secure, though (being a Mother) she parted from all: She took it for a point of *wisdom to make God her heire*, and (upon so good an occasion) give all to him, *instead of a poore legacy to her child*: In which action she hath more encreased her store by *spending of all*; then any art of sparing had ever beene able, either to compasse or contrive.

She hath proved her selfe a gatherer, by scattering.

She hath proved her Charity *artem omnium quæstuosissimam.*

You that would lay out to the best advantage, come hither and learne of her.

Would you be sure to leave your children rich, teach them by your own example, to be charitable, and not to love mony, but doing good with mony, for *μία, η μὲν θεωρεῖται οὐδέν εἰσιν*, Chrys. Tom. 5. 234. H.

Rich and poore are but parts acted here for a while, and we may be mistaken in them.

When the Scene is ended, when death comes, then it appeares truly who were rich, and who were poore.

Then Lazarus may be found in the rich mans bosome, and Dives so poore, that he is faine to begge of Lazarus for one drop of water.

Or if you take rich and poore in your owne sense, and for the present estate; Charity is the surest way to speed for that too: For, what is so given is safely laid up in God's hands, whence *none is able to steale it*, and *from whence you may expect it with encrease*, and be sure never to faile of your expectation.

That treasure which you commit to the Sea, to your Friends, to your Servants, to your Chests, to your selves, may easily miscarry; but that which is lent to God, who hath all the treasure of Heaven and earth at his command, and can not forget how much we are in his Books, That cannot but returne with interest: no debtor can assure us of such certaine pay, as he alwayes performes: sooner may we out-runne our owne shadow, then any

any way exceed God's favour to us, by the love that we, for his sake, expresse to others.

And if all these things be so, why do we not, by this example here, follow after *Charity as a virtue, wherein both our owne welfare, and the welfare of children and family, doth chiefly consist.*

Why do we stretch the desires, and attempts of our purchase, beyond the true bounds? Why are we so little affected with the present necessity of the poore, while we are so tender of the meer imaginary wants, that may perhaps, I know not when, befall our posterity? Why do we destinate this, and that, and almost all we can finger, as strictly and immoveably to our children, as if we could make Lawes to God's Providence, and what he hath given us, infallibly reserve, to be so, and so distributed, at our pleasure; or, as if God had no more for them, but onely that which we can leave them?

I shall easily grant, that great care must be taken in these cases, and that therein a single man may have much advantage: But, for all that, under pretence of this, we must not so

magnifie their wants that may be ; that we undervalue the present and extreame wants of the poore; That is a way to treasure up cruelty, that may light upon our selves and ours hereafter.

Nor must we make use of that providence of ours , for a colour to serve our own turn, as we often do.

How else comes it to passe, that in a suite at law (by way of revenge) to spend a whole estate, any brave sparke would be induced to do it?

How is it, that if a Parasite or worse companion come in the way, we can be free, and frolick, and in neither of these cases , trouble our selves with care of posterity?

But if a good work call for our contribution, we cannot hear of that eare ; if a poor man beg our almes , we shrink up the shoulders, and begin to take thought for wife and children; That is then readiest at hand to shift of our good deeds.

*Tom 3 pag:
467. Hom.
20. H.S.* Will you hear how St. Basil takes away this hindrance ?

VWhen thou comest to God (saith he) to beg wife

wife or Children, or friends , dost thou frame thy prayer thus ?

Good Lord , give me wife and children, and friends , that while I embrace them , and joy in them , and lay up for them , I may be excused from other Christian duties .

Bestow them upon me , and then I shall be lother to relieve the poor , or give to the like pious uses , or any such way to put my self into thy service , or believe that thy providence will extend to them , as to me it hath .

Were not these fair conditions , to be commenced in such a suite ? were not this a fair plea to save our purses ? Can we imagine that God gives us our Children to make us covetous , or will we so requite him for so great a blessing ?

Nay rather let us think him a wise man , that leaves nothing to them of that , which (in all reason) should have been imparted to the necessity of the poore . For one penny , I do not say unjustly gotten ; but one penny uncharitably kept , may eat up twenty other that lie about it , and therefore the Widow here

takes not the care and wisdome of a Mother, by giving that to the present supply of Elijah, that might rather seem fit to have been reserved for the preservation of her son.

But every way wherein we look upon her, she is higher then our praise and admiration.

For (that I may now close up this first reference) we have seen her here *a poore woman of Sarepta*, one that dwelt in the midst of Idolaters, one that hardly ever heard a serious discourse of Charity, one that never was so charmed with the high reward of *Venite benedicti*, as we have all been (I dare say) again & again:

Yet this woman of *Sarepta*, this widow, this Mother, this poore distressed mother, will have *Charity* enough to shame us all, if we look not better about us.

Neither her Country education, nor her widowhood, nor her poverty, nor her own hunger, nor her naturall affection to her only sonne, nor the feare of death, nor any thing could hinder her liberality: *that never had halfe the knowledge, and meanes, and motives*

tives unto it, that we have had.

And yet we have said but little, we have onely spoke of so much as reflects upon her owne person; from thence we come now to looke upon it in reference to the Prophet, vwherein vve have three steps, First as it was done to a Stranger: Secondly, as it vvas done to a Prophet: And thirdly, as it vvas done to this Prophet.

1. First then, though she have but little to give, she makes no scruple to bestow it all upon a meere stranger, that was in want; and so may we be affected to strangers upon the like grounds.

We have God's Precept for it to the Israelites, *Forsake not the stranger so long as thou liwest.* We have God's example for it (in his bounty to all) *Et ne alicui quod Dominus communiter tribuit denegemus,* (saith St Hierome) if God have bestowed his riches indifferently upon all Nations, why should we doubt to bestow our riches as he hath done?

And lastly, we have also the Practice of the Saints of God; amongst them we find Abraham, lying in wait for strangers at the dore of his

his Tent , and when he found them, *not ad. ministring questions* and interrogations, like a Judge that were to examine, but, like a charitable and hospitable man, with all honour & readinesse, *imbracing the opportunity of their entertainment.*

For which cause he was often honoured with the entertainment of Angels . As this poore widow is here likewise honoured with the entertainment of a great Prophet.

2. The second thing to which now I hasten, and which was a greater motive to her; That he was a Stranger, was rather a respect for which she did not refuse him, but that he was a Prophet, hence came the extraordinary measure of her Charity in this place.

For whatsoever she did , she did it for the love and honour of God, and therefore now so readily, and freely , and amply , when she light upon a servant and Prophet of his.

And this is ever the scope of true and perfect Charity, not to aime at vaine glory , not to be led with hope of any temporary reward, not to be moved to it with meere naturall pitty , not to have an eye to any thing else, but the love and glory of God. This

This is true wisdome, & perfect Charity, neither to looke upon her selfe through the poore, nor otherwise to looke upon the poore, but remoter, or nearer, as they stand in some reference to God himselfe. And that should we learn to do, to relieve a Christian in the name of a Christian, and a Prophet in the name of a Prophet.

For, barely to relieve is an act of nature, we cannot but love & pity, if we are our selves, and therefore our kindnesse goes under the name of humanity, as being the proper, and peculiar affection of man. So that in the relieve of others, it may fall out, that we only follow the dictate of nature, but that is far short of the widows Charity here.

A Charity that she prefers, not only before naturall affection, but even before that kind of naturall affection that we shew to our children (the most powerfull of all) In case that a Prophet comes to want, she makes her divine affections farre predominant above her naturall: she pincheth her selfe, and her son, to supply the wants of a Ghostly Father.

This she hath done.

But I feare there is a generation of men in these
E dayes,

dayes, that would have been otherwise affected with the Prophets case.

We should have no abiit & fecit with them, they would rather have said, what is the great Prophet come a begging? that is a good sight, the minor Prophets will serve our turne, or a few good mendicant Priests, or some like Ieroboams of the meanest of the people, that is, as we would have it, and then could we sweetly share their spirituall portions amongst us.

This some would have said. Such as are so farre from being Charitable themselves, that they long to take away the Charity of others, and swallow that of our ancient right, which former Church-devourers, have left behind them against their will, or been forced (in themselves or their posterity) to cast up againe.

Surely such men have not read that (in Malachy) which came from God's own mouth. *Bring my tithes into my barne, and trie if I do not poure a blessing upon you.*

Mal. 3. 10.

They consider not what this widow could have told the, that if God so accept of that, which (being due) is given to his Priests and Prophets, he could not but highly prize a liberal, and charitable

charitable hand towards them, when they are in need.

But this widows Charity went higher still.

It will seeme but a small thing, that she did it to a stranger, to a Prophet, if you will now consider it, as done to this Prophet, to *Elijah*.

How is that you will say, to *Elijah*, Nay, that is not so much, find me out but such a Prophet as *Elijah*, and then, who would not do as the widow hath done? Say you so? If you are so well minded, I will find you out a greater Prophet then this, what think you of Jesus Christ? what you do to *one of the least of his Prophets*, you do to him, and he will set it upon his own score, if it be but a cup of cold water.

Or if you will take it litterally, as it sounds, and as it was spoken, would you have been willing thus to have entertained such a Prophet as *Elijah*, if you had been in the widows stead.

I doubt me that too, for he was somewhat a rough and plain spoken Prophet, he was the Prophet by whose meanes the famine was so long continued: and (verse 1.) you

may see, that his zeal pinched them all.

In which case I know not vwhat you vwould have done, but I vvill tell you vwhat others have done.

Within tvwo chapters from this in hand, you may find a country woman of this widow's, that (upon an expreſſion of his zeal) ſent him ſo kind a message, that he was faine to fly for his life. And you may have another instance from Ahab in a like case to this in hand, in case of another famine whereof Elisha had prophesied. *God do ſo to me, and more alſo, (ſaith he) if the head of Elisha (the ſon of Shaphat) ſhall stand on him this day.* And Herod afterward did it to John the Baptist (that came in the power of Elijah) for a little plain language in his ſermon, he made his head flie off his ſhoulders. This vvas the entertainment that they gave to ſuch a Prophet.

Will you now ſee, how this Prophet (that had done the like) was entertained by our poore widow? *Abiit & fecit: Shall I tell you what that is, by way of Comment on these words.*

First, *He asked water, and ſhe grants it: Then he asked bread; ſhe ſaith, ſhe hath none,* and

and good woman she swears she hath none.

By which eager expression of her selfe, she both excuseth, and cleares her deniall, and shows *how sorry she is*, that she must deny, and *how ready she would have beene to have given her bread too*, if she had had it.

And withall (which he did not demand) she confesseth *how much, or rather how little, flower, & oyle she had in her house, that so by that flower, & oyle, she might win him to stay,* though she had not bread for him at present.

Well, vven when all her store vvas reckoned, it proved *little enough for her self and her son, to keep them alive till the next day.*

The Prophet begges that of her, and she grants it, but he vwill have her go presently to her house, he vwill have her *make it ready,* and he vwill have her come back to him to the gate, vwhere they talked together, and *bring it thither.*

She grants this too, and all this service, all this Charity to the Prophet Elijah, the only man that brought the famine upon them.

All this to him, and *to him all this without any dispute, vwithout any delay, vwithout bidding*

ding him come (at least) to fetch it, and vwithout *conditioning* for a share out of it, to relieve her selfe, and her son, being so put to it: She is as brief as she is admirable. Not a vword for her self, but (*abiit & fecit*).

3 And now I have brought you directly upon that vwhich is the emphasis, and life of all, in the manner [*Abiit & fecit*] and in the order [*juxta verbum Eliae*] If I may borrovv a vword or tvvo of them both together, they shovv that she did it with obedience, and readinesse, and labour, and silence, and humility, and vwith any thing else, vwherevvith it lay in her povver, to send out her *Charity*, like the *Queen of vertues*, that should ever be attended with some followers or other, fit to wait upon her.

For if she had barely given her almes, she had made God a debtor only for the gift, but now, when she is so serviceable, so quick, so solicitous, and ambitious of it, she hath so farre ingaged the King of Heaven, that he will have a *miracle* (*in the mouth of the Prophet*) to make her a *present requitall*, for such a compleat *Charity* as that.

And

And indeed, if *Abraham* the Father of the Faithfull, that was so much confirmed, by often conference with God himselfe. If he was no otherwise rewarded, then with a miracle in his *Isaack*: It cannot be that this rose among the thornes, this woman of Sidon that in regard of the place wherein she lived) was (her selfe) a singular mirrour, of faith, and love, and obedience: It cannot be that she should be otherwise rewarded then in the like preservation of her selfe, and her only sonne.

For (if you look well upon it) what she hath done, is not much unlike to that of *Abraham*.

Abraham was commanded by God to sacrifice the life of his only sonne, and *Abiit & fecit*, he went about it.

She was intreated by the Prophet, to offer up all the provision that was then left to preserve the life of her onely sonne, and her selfe too; and she went as willingly about it.

He went about it secundum verbum Domini, just in that manner as God had commanded,

And She went about it, juxta verbum *Eliæ*, that is, according to the word of *Elijah*.

In either act, In his, and in hers, there

was so much *Faith, and Love, and Obedience,* that I know not which I should first admire.

But shall I *compare them in that, which comes nearer to the act in hand.*

How did *Abraham* behave himself, when he was to be Charitable, and Hospitable, and how did she?

Abraham was a rich man, and a great Prince that had a multitude of servants ready at command, & yet in the exercise of Charity he would rather *employ himselfe, then his servants.*

And what doth the good widow here? she doth whatsoever the Prophet desires, and whatsoever she is able, & *she doth it all herself.*

And there would be little difference, if *Abrahams* place, and wealth, had not made his service and humility the more conspicuous.

What shall we say then? If the great Patriarch in the midst of his wealth, If the good widow in the extremity of her poverty; If both of them were so studious, and observant of the poore, as if they had met with some great Benefactors:

If these righteous soules hunted after *Charity*, and have so embraced it, and pleased themselves in it, should vve (poor sinners) either

either wholly neglect such a soveraigne cordiall against sinne, or, (at least) performe it so stalely, or so coolely, as if we had never heard of these motives, and patternes, which they have richly afforded unto us?

Alas to give almes, in it selfe is no such great matter; specially in the rich (who are as God's stewards over the poore) It is not so muche favour in them, as indeed Justice, and so plaine injury not to do it.

Why else do the Hebrew so often expresse Charity by יְמִינָה which signifies justice?

Why doth the Greeke say (Syrach: 4.) Sap. 4.1.
εἰς τοπεῖν τὸν ζωτὸν τὴν εὐτομὴν: the same (in effect) with that of Salomon, keepe not thy goods from Prov. 3.27. the owner of it; that is, give some to the poore, they have a right to that part which is superfluous?

Why doe the Latine render, *Justitia for
est in coram hominibus. ut non in coram deo*: *Nolite facere justitiam
vestram coram hominibus*, doe not your Almes before men. Mat. 6.1.

Doth not all this conclude, that it is no such matter (in it selfe) to give almes? It is no more then our duty.

But how then? (you will say) why, this is a great matter, to give almes according to the patterne set by the widow here: to give it seasonably, to give it chearfully, to give it with her service and humility, to the extent of her meanes, upon so good an occasion.

This is it that is worthy of notice and admiration: for there is nothing so sure, as that God requires our almes deeds, not so much for the good of them that receive, as of them that give. Or else he is able enough to supply the poore, without being beholden to the rich.

And therefore you shall ever find, that he is more earnest about the manner of giving, then about the thing it selfe: it is not a giver but a chearfull giver that he respects.

See it here in the case in hand.

Was it any such great matter, that Elijah should come so great a journey, to be entertained by a peore widow with bread and water?

Could not Almighty God have furnished him still with better provision, by the service of a Raven, as he did before?

Yes, he could have done it, nothing more easily: but that was the least intent in the Prophets mission.

This

This was rather the thing that was aimed at : to shew, and to crowne the widowes Charity. To make it appeare , how presently without any query, without any scruple, without any partiality , or favour to her owne urgent necessity, she went about it, how readily , and heartily , not onely as a chearfull, but as an humble and a dutifull giver.

This is (if any thing can be) to make sure for that , wherein the life of a good action consists, so to be Charitable as we shoule be, and as we shall be , if we follow the rich patterne of this poore widow, and take it out by our owne practice.

Which that we may be able , and willing to doe. So he grant , who is the God of all mercy and compassion, to whom —

F I N I S.

6

A SERMON

upon *Job 29. 15.*

Preached before the JUDGES, at a
General Assize in *Hertford*, when that
good and charitable Person *Rowland*
Hales Esquire, was High-Sheriff
of that Shire.

By DAVID STOKES, D. D.



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Job. 29. 15.

I was the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame.

 **N** this chapter we have a brief story of one, that was (in his time) so absolute a Magistrate, so compleat a Judge, that he may well be the pattern, and *myrrour*, of *all that come after him*.

And this way of pattern (*iter per exempla*) you know it is our surest, and our shortest way; we can not better *read our own duties*, then in *the lives of others*. We can not better see the true face of virtues and vices, then we may do it in their actions.

I might have said in *their actions*, [and in them only] we need not enquire much after *their persons*. For vice we must imitate in no man (be his person never so great:) But for

A his

his virtue (be he in himself never so mean) we may safely propound that, to our imitation.

It is neither his nor ours, it carries no mark of any owner, but of God himself, from whom it was first taken as the Author of every good and perfect gift.

Yet, because we rather *love virtue, where we like the person,* and we had rather frame our selves to the example of those that were of some esteem, and place, and authority; therefore *who it is that speaks this,* that would first be known, who it is that saith here, *I was the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame.* They are the words of a great man (every way great:) And. [if that may any thing move your attention] whether soever you cast your eyes round about my text, you may spie out some *arguments of his greatness.*

Ver. 6.

That he was great in wealth, the 6. verse tells us, *He washed his paths with butter, and the rock poured him out rivers of oil.*

Ver. 7.

That he was great in Authority, it is plain by the next words; *He had his chair in the publick gates, and streets of the City* [which were

were in those times the ordinary places of judgement.]

The 8. verse shows him as great in *Honor*,
The young men saw him and hid themselves,
the aged arose and stood up.

Will you add unto all these, a rare gift [an excellent power in learning and eloquence.) It is the next thing in the sequele of the words: *The Princes refrained talking, Ver. 9:* and laid their hands on their mouths. *The Nobles held their peace, and their tongues cleaved to the roof of their mouth. Ver. 10.* When the ear heard him, it blessed him; and when the eye saw him, *Ver. 11.* it gave witness unto him. And thus we see him great in Wealth, in Authority, in Honour, in Learning, and in Eloquence.

But was he also as great in *virtue*?

Did not his preferments outrun his deserts?

No, (if that may add any thing more to your attention) for the *two main virtues* of so great a Magistrate, (*Justice and Mercy*) the next verse speaks his greatness in them. He delivered the poor that cried; the fatherless, and him that had none to help him: *The blessing of Ver. 12.*

13. him that was ready to perish came upon him---he caused the widows heart to sing for joy. He put on
 14. Righteousness, and it clothed him, his Judgement was his robe, and his diadem. All these usher the way to my text, and may easily persuade us, that they are the words of a great Man, of a great Magistrate, and of a great Judge. For, that is specially aimed at (in this so large a description) and that you may know it is so)
 15. his Mercy and Justice are repeated again, in the next words after my Text. I was a father to the poor, and the cause which I knew not, I searched it out. I brake the jaws of the wicked, and
 17. plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

You see then how my Text is hedged in every way, with honorable testimonies of this Judge. And, as it is in the midst, so it is indeed, the life and virtue of all the rest. It is the true embleme of a good Magistrate, and perfect character of a good Judge: I had almost said the very Idea of true Greatness, and Justice it self. But I must not say so. It is not here in the abstract Job is the man that had it; I was the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame (saith he) that is, he was ready to become any

any thing for their sakes, and willing to apply himself to any necessity of their wants : For in these two [*in oculo, & pede*] if they be well considered, we shall find all that is requirable in a good Judge.

Shall I fetch them out of their natural method, and first take them both together.

If he be both the eye and the foot ; Nay, if *he be either, oculus, or pes*, we are sure he is a *part of the body politick*. That is the first thing that follows out of this ground ; a *near reference* of his to all that are under his authority ; *specially to the blind and the lame*, that is, to the weakest of them, *I am their eye* (saith *Job*) or, (if that be too little) I will go *as low as their feet* ; any thing for a nearer claim, and challenge unto them. So saith *Job* : And the greatest Magistrates and Judges should say the like for any of us their poor fellow-members. *A double interest* we have in them, as the parts of our body politick : They are the eyes, they are the feet, and therefore *we do no more then we should do*, to *rely upon them* for their help. And *they have done no more than they should do* ; what good soever

soever they have done to the weal publick : For the conservation and good of the whole body, is the language which every particular member doth naturally speak.

But I will dwell no longer in these Generals: I will come now to *consider these two parts asunder* : And first the eye : *Oculus eram--*

Parts of the body they are (our greatest Judges and Magistrates) But this *name of the Eye gives them an eminent place* in the body, seats them aloft, where they have the command of the inferior parts, and allows them an honorable place in the Common-wealth.

If you ask ; *Cui bono ? To what end are the eyes mounted aloft ?* Is it only for the eyes sake ; or is it not still, for *the good of the whole body*. Surely in vain were so much care taken for them (as there is) by the other parts, if their requital were not answerable.

For (to see it in the natural eye first.)

Why doth nature wall the eyes about, with those bones that frame their orb ?

Why doth she *arch them above* with the eye-brows ?

Why doth she *fence them (on either side)* with hair

hair, in such manner shot out of the skin, that no motes, nor any other annoyance shall fall into them ?

Why are they by *the prominence of the cheeks* every way so secured, that (if any thing rush against them) they may be still unoffended ?

Why all this for the eyes, *that they may skulk in a den* & be nuzled *in security*, and rocked asleep in a strong fort ?

When we have asked this of the natural Eye, then come to such an Eye as *Job* was here.

Why was *Job*, and why are other great Ministers of State, the Rulers and *Judges of other men* ?

Why are they seated so strongly above others ?

Is it only, *that they may be safe*, and *over-top the rest* in honor and dignity ?

Holy *Job* is none of them that would have said so, he would rather have told us, that these eyes are placed there, *like Watchmen in the highest towers*, that (upon the hope of their vigilancy) they which are under them may be the more secure, and that from thence

(like)

(like higher lights) they may better derive their influence to the inferiour orbs.

The height of their place is not the ground of their honor; (they begin at a wrong end that build there) For, be the place never so high, it is but *the place of a high office*; and the daily execution of that to the good of the body, that makes it a place of Honor.

Prov. 25.1. Gloria Regum investigare rem (saith the wisest King;) and we may say (in the language of my Text) *Gloria oculorum investigare rem*] It is the glory of all that are in eminent places, to be searching further with the eye of their *wisdom*, then the capacity of ordinary persons can either pierce into, or comprehend. That is the right use of such an Eye.

But, if they be *Eyes of an infectious nature*, like the Crocodiles eyes, able to kill whom they list, and none shall know who hurt them.

If they be *windows*, ever open to let in *mischief*, and ready to betray the other senses, were it not far better they were somewhere else. For to little purpose are they set in the highest places, that do not there carefully *espie* what is good; and as providently foresee, and give

give warning of what is hurtfull to the other members.

I have done with the Place, with the Strength, and with the Height of it.

A second thing that we may observe by way of Analogie, is the *natural beauty of the Eye in it self*, without reference to the place : And indeed, all the beauty that is in the place, is from that derived unto it. *Non domus Dominum, sed Dominus domum* (we use to say) it is not the place that graceth the eye, but it is the eye that *beautifies the place* ; nay, that *beatifies the whole body*. *Thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes* (saith our blessed Lord in the *Canticles*.) What are those Eyes think you, that did so ravish the holiest Bridegroom ? What else, but the *Ministers of the State, and of the Church* ?

For, these are the parts, that (of all other) must be *without blemish*, that so they may be *enabled to punish the faults of others*, without any check to themselves. He that here calls himself the Eye, will you see how beautifull he was in himself : Look again upon the next words before my Text, and tell me,

B if

if ever there was a Statesman of greater beauty.

Ver. 14.

The Eye it self is not lapt in more curious and dainty tunicles, then he lapt himself. He put on Righteousness, and it clothed him, His Judgement was his Robe and his Diadem.

Here is a Judge in his best robes of honor, clad with Righteousness. And Righteousness is such a beauteous and amiable thing ~~as the Sunne is in the Heavens~~ (faith Aristotle) that is, the Sun, in all his glory, comes short of that.

Now, as the Eye is the seat of beauty, so also (having the variety of many objects) it should not chuse any, but those that are bea-
tiful.

They must not be given to filthy lucre (faith the Apostle, of the Eyes of the Church.) And so may we say of those, that are the Eyes of the Common-wealth. What should they do with filthy lucre. That word [filthy] is able to turn away any eye from it ; theirs especially.

{ Some rare beauty is befitting such Eyes.

{ Some glorious virtue sutes them best.

For, as black and white colours are to the eyes of

of the body, so is *virtue* and *vice* to the eye of Judgement, in ordinary men. Black vice gathers the beams of the sight in one, that the eye may see, and be intent upon it. Fair virtue scatters them abroad, and therefore hardly admits of a perfect apprehension. Whence it is, that in ordinary Judgements that partake with sense, we are *quicker to espie and censure a man for one vice, than to love and reward him for many virtues.* So it is in ordinary judgements. But I hope it is *not so in the most judicious eye of him, that more strictly bears the name of a Judge :* His eye is not so ready to see and censure the worst of a man, as it is to see and love the best. He is *most earnest in the best cause, and most affected to the best Lawyer that pleads before him ;* For he knows that it matters much, whom the eye of the Judge doth most favour. And *this be said of that beauty, that either should be in the eye, or should draw the eye unto it.*

There is yet a third thing in the eye, by which nature hath made it more usefull to the body.

B 2

That

That it is the only fountain of pity : The dore where we send out our love : The passage of our tears : and the best Interpreter of our inward metcy and compassion (I speak not for too much pity of Malefactors, but just pity of the Innocent.) And this, of all other, must not be left out, if we proportion a Judge to the Eye : For we shall get little by the two former without this. To tell him that he is in the highest place, is to make him proud, and that he is the most glorious and beautifull party is to make him yet more proud: but to make him the tendrest part, and that from which (of all other) we chiefly look for love and pity : that is it that cannot but move him. And this, I know not, whether it may be more urged, from the eye, or from the feet : So tender are both of them, the feet no less then the eye, the veins meeting all there, and making them also easily affected to the quick with the least touch. And therefore for this (my Lords) having two wayes to urge it, I may presume we are sure to speed, [apud tam equos rerum Judices] And so we should do, though it were not urged at all.

To

To pity the Innocent, to commiserate the distressed estate of the poor, it needs no persuasion ; all good natures bring it with them from their Cradles : Only this is our misery ; Great fortunes (they say) use to alter our dispositions, and many, when they are come to be great men, are fain to be intreated to put on the natural affection of men.

Anatomists tell us, that in the eye of man there is a muscle, that lifts it upwards (and so I confess it should be, not in pride, but in some better ejaculations towards heaven.)

But there is a Connexion in these words of my Text, which, like a strong muscle, seems to draw the eyes of the Judge downward, as low as may be. He is made the eye to the blind, and the feet to the lame : and therefore should his care and oversight of the poor, and fatherless, and widow be like the desires of the eye, never satisfied, but with the sight and succour of them. And then somewhat would be done in reference to the feet, which now we come to.

For, a near challenge we have to the Judge, as he is the eye ; but (to make it sure) here is another part of my Text, that makes him still the

the more ours, and puts him yet the more in mind of what we may expect from him. It is not enough for him to sit aloft in the chiefest Castle of the body, like an imperious eye, and perhaps be a little affected with the trouble of it. *The eye is of it self the busiſt member,* and will be ever employed in the variety of several objects. And so must they be that are the eyes of the Common-wealth, ever in action. *Reſt muſt be rather for others then them :* That is something more then we heard before. But that is too little to set out the labour of a good Judge. We muſt bring *the Metaphore down to the very feet,* rather then not express this to the very full. *It is the feet that are to bear the burden of the whole body ;* and that must fall to the Judges share, if he will be like *Job* in goodness as well as greatness. He muſt be the pillar, the prop, the *foot of the Common-wealth,* yes, of the meanest part of it : *I was the foot to the lame* (saith *Job* there.)

We need not go farre to learn that. The *name of a King* (the *supreme Head and Judge* over all) implies this in the Greek. The
young

young Scholars will tell you that *βασιλεύς* (a King) is *βασιλεύειν*, the very foundation, the lowest part of all. So is *שָׁׁמֶן* in Hebrew (the name of a Prince or great man) of *שָׁׁמֶן* (to bear) because he takes the burthen, and care of others upon himself : He is the foot as well as the eye.

This was Plinie's Dialect, to express the care of *Trajan*. *Incedis pedibus, ambulas inter nos*, faith he, in *Panegyr.* where [ambulare] hath the same sense of publick conversation that *רָאשׁ* in the Hebrew, often hath in the old Testament. And in the Greek *ποστεύειν* and *μεμηκάνειν* have in the new. *Ambulare*, in this notion, when it is used of Princes (of such as *Trajan*) it doth as good as tell us, that something of importance it is expected he should do, by which succeeding ages, as by several footsteps, may trace him out, and find an easier way to the publick good.

Shall I put you in mind of the language wherein *Hobab*, *Moses* his Kinsman, expressed the great trouble that *Moses* had in judg. *Numb. 17.* judging the people. [*Sustentent tecum onus populi & non solus graveris*]

Put

Put them together, and here is both *ambulare* and *sustentare* : and (of the two) this *sustentare* is more properly the use of the foot. And so it is of Judges, and the greatest and noblest amongst men. The *whole* body, *especially* the *blind* and the *lame*, (the weakest party) must *rely upon them*. And though I speak much for [*sustentare*] yet I beseech you (my good Lords) remember [*ambulare*] too. And, when you walk about in *your* several *Circuits* (to see the *ruines* of the *land*) think upon the great Judge that says, *Scrutabor Jerusalena in lucernis*] And make this your comment upon it, and the Application for every Judge in his own person. *I will be the eye to the blind, and feet to the lame* (in my Circuit) to find them out, and to help and support them. I know you will give me leave to say so. And we all hope (my good Lords) that you will be *such Searchers*, and *such Lights*, and *such Eyes* in every Circuit, where you come. And then the next thing I have to say, shall be only this : *Ride on, and good luck have you with your Honor*. Let *your Table* be *richly decked*, and *your head* *refreshed with oyl*, and *your*

cup overflow ; and (more then that) Let all the eyes that see you, bless you, and Let all the feet that come near you bow down unto you : For you are the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame.

You see, as my Text doth, so do I ; I joyn the parts together again (the eye and the foot.) And so it agrees well every way, the *Eye of Honor* and *Contemplation*, and the *foot of Labour* and *Prætice* ; The *Eye that sees what is to be done*, and *Foot that is able to go about it*. When these are joyned together, what title can we give them good enough ? They are like *Starres* (in their several orbes) that impart the benefit of their light and motion to the inferiour bodies. *Like another great Elias* [*Currus & Auriga Israelis*] *The Charriot and the Horseman of Israel* : The Charriot (to carry the burden) and the Horseman or *Waggoner* (to see and direct the way, that is [*Oculus & Pes*] the *Eye and the Foot*.)

Which are ever so well met, that the Prophet *Isaiah* puts them (in other terms) into the promise of a future happy government. *Erunt Reges nutritii tui, Kings shall be thy nur-* 49. 23.

C sing

sing Fathers, and Queens thy nursing Mothers. Nursing Fathers, and Nursing Mothers, What's that? to carry them about (as it were) in their bosomes: To be their eyes and their feet. I cannot put it into better words then those of my Text.

For let the Nurse leav the Child a while to it self, and it will soon appear, that *the poor Infant had no other eyes or feet* (to help it self with-all) *but only those of the Nurse*. And let those that God hath set over us, either leave the people to themselves, or be forced so to leave them. And then tell me, if such a people would not soon prove, as these are in my Text, *blind and lame*. And happy then would be the feet of those that could bring us tydings of one that would be (in Job's description) *Oculus cæco, & pes claudo*] *Eye to the blind, and Foot to the lame*.

But here I must stop: For, now (my Lords) I have finished the greatest part of my Task. If you will give me leave to search a little further into Job's meaning, it may be we shall find, that this verse contains the *Form, the Soul, and the Essence of a good Judge*. For

For, of all the parts and members of the body, only these two are peculiarly attributed unto the soul. The *Understanding is the Eye*, the *Affections are the Feet*, and these two make up the whole soul.

1. And again, *these Eyes* in my text, though in some sense they may be understood of the body politick; yet in no sense can they be understood of the body of a man: For though it be against reason, that the greater light should be extinguished by the lesser. Yet, so it falls out, that *corporal eyes rather trouble the understanding in the course of Justice*: Therefore we use to paint Justice rather blinded, then having the liberty of such eyes. And those famous Judges among the Græcians in *Areopago* were wont to sit at midnight, that they might not *discern the difference of any man's person*.

2. And thirdly, If we search what may be the meaning of it, which is the surest way, by the law of Opposition, then we shall both confirme this sense of the words, and gain somewhat else unto it.

For, what do you take to be meant by *the blind*

blind and the lame, in this reference to a Judge.

1.

Sure. If we referre it to the under-officers of Justice (which his eye must chiefly observe and guide.) What is *Blindness in the Informers*, in the *Witnesses*, in the *Jury*, in the *Pleaders*, but only Ignorance. And, what is *Lameness on their parts*, but the tedious protraction of poor mens Suits, or what else (of that nature) offend the [currat lex] the *Swift course of Justice*.

Now then, to build upon this, if *Blindness* and *Lameness*, be *Ignorance* and *Slowness*, in those that are to be guided by the Judge; what must his *Eye* be (in reference to them) but the *Eye of Understanding*, the eye of *Wisdom*? And thus it referres to such Officers of Justice as are not worthy of that name.

2.

Then, (in a second place) If these blind and lame referre to them that are to be judged to the [rei] that is to them whose cause is in hand: Then must blindness and lameness in them be nothing else but *impotency* & *inability* to help themselves; which should move the Judge (like God himself) to *incline* rather

rather to the weaker side ; not to look upon the greatest through the optique-glass of his own affections, and so to make them seem greater and nearer to him then they should be, but to be the eye to the blind, and the feet to the lame, rather to help them that cannot otherwise help themselves.

You see the ground of what we are to say.

Now, to set upon it in particular.

The first ranck of our blind men, are such (in the Courtes of Justice) as should be the eyes to the Judge ; but some way or other are so blinded, that he is fain to find eyes for them.

1.

And (that we may discover them the better) *their ignorance* will teach us to make them of two kinds, according to the cause of their blindness ; some of them being blinded by *gross ignorance*, which we call *ignorant infidels* ; others by affected ignorance *hypocritical infidels*. And of the two, the latter are the more dangerous, and call for a greater caveat from the Judge. For, they can indeed, but they will not pierce any further then to the scum and top of things ; wherein, to say truth, we are

are apt to offend most of us. It may well pass for *an epidemical disease* : for it is not our ignorance, but our hope, and fear, and love, and anger, and hate, that is commonly suffered to bind up our sight in darkness, and lead us blindfolded into all error. All which are so ordinary, that *Solomon accounted them for wise men, that had their eyes in their heads.* For many have found out new devices, by placing their eyes where they should not be (in the hand, rather then in the head) by that means seeing more where they have some feeling of the cause, then where their heads might better direct them.

If there be any such that hear me this day, it is likely, *they do not see any such things in themselves.* For what sight can we expect in blind men ? yet perhaps in a Sermon, by the help of the Preachers candle, they may begin to see a glimmering light of what they should : But when they come to their old places of gain, their old thoughts meet them afresh, as familiarly as if they had left them there till their return.

And this, I would it were their fault alone.

There

There we erre too, all of us, whatsoever we think of our worst affections in Gods house, when their ugliness is ript up, we shall easily come to our old former opinions, when we come to the former places of our practise, unless (with the *Lamiae*) we could leave our old eyes at home, and carry new and better along with us.

I have been the larger in this discovery of their blindness, as being the cause of another vice that follows after it : For in that method my Text brings them in ; first the blind, and then the lame. *A lame pace must needs proceed from that blindness* : And when we have found the cause of the one, we may safely presume that to be the cause of the other also. *If their blindness proceed from gross ignorance, that is it that makes their delays*. *If it grow from affected ignorance, if gain or passion stand between them and wisdome, then they are lame ; they go slowly (in the course of law) for the same cause*. That is it that makes the Tryal creep so slowly, or rather so sliily forward, that it carrieth with it no witness of any proficiency. That is it that makes them

crie

crie with the sluggard, yet a little, and yet a little, while the poor man's cause turns about like the dore on her hinges, and is never the nearer to what it should be, after all their delayes.

But here I would be understood with some caution ; for I know the use and the need of just demurres. *The Romans had it* (in their law) under the terme of [Ampliare] as appears by more then one place in *Tullies Orations*. In the Greek we find it under the name of *ampliari*.

Act 24.22. *βάλλεις* (in the Apostle Pauls case) ἀφαιεὶς αὐτούς. *Fælix* put them off for a while, and took an [amplius deliberandum] a demorari, that is, a demurre. This was a good piece of wisdom and justice in *Fælix* ; and if *Fælix* had staid here, he had done well, and been like his name. But go along with him to the 26. verse of this chapter : *And there is such a delay of justice, as makes little for Fælix his credit.* The words go thus, *Fælix hoped that mony would have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him.* *Fælix* his first demurre, verse 22. was fit to be used for justice sake : But such as his last, and tedious delayes for base

base ends of his own, that is it I would not have, and that is the fault which puts *these delayers of Justice* into the number of *lame men*, whose feet *seem to crawl, rather then go*, if some bodies hands be not quick enough; an honest man may soon be as farre as heaven before them.

Pardon me (my honoured Lords) for speaking of any blind and lame men, in the Courts of Justice. For I confess I know none that are so, and I hope there are no such here. But we have learned the more to fear other Professions, by that we see too often in our own. All that are of our Coat should be (as it is of you in my Text) *the eyes to the blind, the Seers of Israel, and the Lights of the land*. But even into that holy Order, many blind guides are crept in (we know not how) And one that is truly ~~an overseer~~, a good Overseer would do well: And if he fail, there is ~~an eye~~ ~~an eye~~, an eye from Heaven, that sees all. So it is perhaps in the course of Law, Many clear eyes there are, *Many good Lawyers*. God be thanked. But because *blind men may stumble upon their places*; therefore a

Judge there must be (a clearer Eye:) And if he fail, *Deus stat in medio Deorum* (saith the Psalmist) that is, *in medio Iudicium*, as the Hebrew word is taken.

So, for the other member of my Text, we should be all *like feet to the lame, surest to stand fast, and closest to them that need us most.* But, because many of us *halt between two opinions*, it is to be suspected, that some in law may halt as much *between two causes*, and being feed on both parts, will not stir a foot to help either. And though indeed these are no parts of the body, no more then wooden legs; yet (of all other) they must *not be touched on the blind side*: Every small reprehension galls them, because it calls their eyes home, to see a glimpse of what they should be.

But now I have done with those blind Cripples, I will only commit them to the eye of the Judge; it must be his wisdom to see the cause fare never the worse for their sakes. Upon him we rely much; And *If the eye be single, all the body will be so: but if the eye be darkness, how great is that darkness?*

If

If there be any defect in the inferiour Officers of Justice, the danger is the less, and it may the more be born with. But *if the eye offend*—you know what follows, *pluck it out*. He would not have said so, that is the Judge of all : but to shew us how the greatest danger is in that. As needs it must be ; for the best thing corrupted, is the worst : A bad man is the worst of all creatures, and an evil Eye is the worst of all members.

There is no passage more easie for entry of vice, then by the cranny of the Eye : For it is alwayes busie about some thing, it is of too fine and quick a mettal to love idleness : If it be not employed as it should be, it will be employed as it should not : And so the whole body may fare the worse for the Eye. As it may for the feet too ; If they be lame, the whole body is unconstantly carried on either side : For still I must joyn them both together : and so must every good Judge that will be like to this pattern here, *the eye to the blind, and the feet to the lame.*

Hitherto we have seen what should be the provident care of the Judge to any blind or

lame under him, that is, to any that may obscure or hinder the cause.

Now, what is the end of all this ? but only that he may be able to help, *an other rank of blind and lame, the poor Prisoners, the weak Defendants, the impotent Widows and Orphans* or any other, that being wrongfully called in question, know not how to help themselves.

When the Apostles came near any blind, or lame, the Scripture saith they would ~~anxiety~~, earnestly and affectionately behold them. If these eyes in my Text (our grave and learned Judges) will please to ~~anxiety~~, to look seriously upon them. How many arguments may they espie in the pooreſt Innocents, that could not but move them unto pity ?

In every one of them, they look upon the *Image of God*, that is so obscured ---- and they look upon *their own nature*, that is so afflicted. In what heavy plight foever they are, they are the members of the same body with themselves ; and therefore no pearls should move their eyes so much, as the tears of a poor

poor Innocent. They are able to move God himself, who keeps them in a bottle as a rich treasure. *They are no eyes that see not this :* and if they so pass it over, and look for others to come and help them, in vain is it that they are stil'd [the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame.]

Nay, it is not enough to help them in this case, that is, only to be their hands, or their feet ; the ground of their help must first come from a tender eye : What is it to relieve a man in misery, with as little care and affection, as if we did it to a dog ? The better judgement of such a deed is from the eye, if that be clearfull, and well affected in the doing of it. And if these eyes here be not thus affected, they will once be sorry that ever they had the honor to be eyes : therefore, in Gods name, let them look equally and friendly upon all. But if there be any difference in the persons of men, here it is, God hath made them the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame. If they lean to any side, the best way is, to lean to the weakest. This is one thing.

And again (which is a second motive)

Who

Who so easily abused, as the blind and the lame? therefore God hath made the greatest Judges to be their Patrons, their eyes and their feet.

And this may beget a great confidence in a poor man: If he see with the eye of the Judge, he need not be afraid to meet his enemy in the face: If he stand upon their feet, whosoever riseth up against him, he is sure to stand fast.

And is it not able to breed as much terror in his adversary. Shall any man dare to grind the face of the poor, when the Judge saith, he is the eye to the poor, & therfore must not spare them, that so nearly provoke his angry eye. Dare any man trample upon the poor, and think to raise himself by their fall? When the Judge saith, he is the feet to the poor, and therefore cannot but be as ready to trample upon him again.

3. For, how can any good Judge but be affected with their cause, since he must imagine himself in their person? It is the only thing, that *Lysias* makes *Euphiletus* desire of the Judges, in his Oration against *Eratosthenes*,

nes, πεὶ πολὺ ἀποικίαν, &c. I desire no more (saith he) but that you would imagine this injury done to your selves ; and when you have made it your own case, I know it cannot but much affect you.

The like you have in Demosthenes καὶ Κέρω-
θο. Αξιούμενος ὅτες αὐτοῖς ἔσεσθαι, &c. that is, Put on the same affection in my cause, which you would do if it were yours.

4.

I know not how any may be moved by these arguments ; without them (me thinks) it were motive enough from their own satisfaction : For there may come a time, when old Age may rank the greatest Potentates and Judges of the earth, and best of men, in the number of blind and decrepit, and lame, rob'd of all their health, and outward contentment. And then there will be no pleasure, to the meditation of their former good deeds. They are only valerous then that are not afraid to think of themselves, that dare ask account of their own lives (as Job did here) and can answer themselves in his words. *I was (once) the eye to the blind, and the feet to the lame.* That puts me in mind of another Argument, left in my

Text,

Text, and with that I will conclude.

5. *I was (saith Job) I was the eye---He took opportunity of doing good while he had those high places.* In which (though a man would have thought him strangely seated) yet, the event proved, that height unable to secure him from that danger. *He was once the eye to the blind--- yet now the blind and the lame were in a farre better case then he, who so poor as Job?* And it is meet indeed, that all of us (especially great men) should stand thus tickle. *This jogs them as much as pleasure lulls them asleep. This whispers in their ears,* not to pass the fair opportunity of doing good to others, last, when the stroke comes upon themselves, they have cause to expect as little.

For greatness hath no other circuit, nor ought any man to dream of any other, then that, for which all power, honor, and wealth, is given to him; *to support the weakness of other mens fortunes,* and to be (as Job was in his greatest glory) the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame.

And now (my good Lords) I shall trespass no more upon your patience, then to put

put you in mind, that *this text is only your text, and the application must be yours*, by keeping the same Pronoun to it that *Job* doth here ; *I was the eyes, I was the feet.* They are not words for any of us to speak in such a compleat sense as you can : And so ever account them as the best priviledge that you have. *St. Paul* would not communicate his bonds to any (except these bonds, saith he.) Be you as dainty of these titles, keep the verse still in the same number, and make it good in your own persons.

And though you be two commonly joyned together in your Circuits, so that (a man would think) it were language good enough to say, *We two were the eyes to the blind, and the feet to the lame.* Yet, if you be rul'd by my Text, that is not enough, you must keep the number as strictly as *Job* did in the Hebrew [אָנִי עֵינֵיכֶם and אָנִי רַגְלֵיכֶם] *I was their two eyes, and their two feet,* saith he in the duall number.

Nor did he keep it, *in the tongue only, but in his practise.* He never *blinkt to the Rich*

with one eye, while he cast the other upon the poor : While he set one foot forward to help the poor, he never kept the other backward to secure the rich : His two eyes were for the blind, and his two feet for the lame. All this (to be sure on) he ever did in his own person, *ego oculus, I was the two eyes.* He did not put it off to others, in hope they would do it for him. And that is the surest way, for every man that looks for the reward, in his own person too. For there will come a day at the great Assise of the whole world, when this Text will be thought none of the weakest pleas for the Kingdome of heaven. *Receive the Kingdome* (saith the great Judge of all:) why so? because you visited the poor, fed them, clothed them, &c.

But none have such visitations as you have in your Circuits, none have such opportunities to makes this plea good, *ego eram oculus tuorum.* Wonder not that Job laid so confidently, *I know that my Redeemer lives, and that I shall see him with these eyes.* Here is some ground of his confidence, himself had

had been the eyes to the blind, and could not but be so rewarded.

Which happy reward, we humbly beseech that great Judge of all, Jesus Christ, the righteous, out of the riches of his mercy to bestow upon you in the last day.

To whom, as you do, we all desire to ascribe, all Honour and Glory, now and for ever.

F I N I S.
